

**UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT  
DISTRICT OF NEW JERSEY**

In re:	)	Chapter 11
	)	
BLOCKFI INC., et al.,	)	Case No.: 22-19361(MBK)
	)	
Debtors.	)	(Jointly Administered)
	)	
_____	)	

**DECLARATION OF DISINTERESTEDNESS OF THE  
HONORABLE CHRISTOPHER S. SONTCHI, RET.**

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I, Christopher S. Sontchi, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, hereby declare under the penalty of perjury as follows:

1. I am licensed to practice law in the State of Delaware, the United States District Court for the District of Delaware, and the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit. I am a member in good standing in all three jurisdictions.

2. I am the sole member of Sontchi, LLC, with my principal office at 11 Tobin Court, Hockessin, Delaware 19707. I am authorized to make this Declaration on behalf of myself and Sontchi, LLC.

3. I am the former Chief Judge of the United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Delaware, having served in that capacity between 2018 and 2021. I served as a Bankruptcy Judge in the District of Delaware from 2006 until my retirement from the bench in 2022. During my tenure as Bankruptcy Judge, I presided over numerous significant Chapter 11 cases, including Catholic Diocese of Wilmington, American

Home Mortgage, Energy Future Holdings Corp., Visteon, Six Flags, Molycorp, Borden Dairy, Exide Technologies, Brooks Brothers, and Eagle Hospitality. I also served as the Court appointed mediator on many Chapter 11 cases including Tidewater, Vivus, and Mallinckrodt. I am currently serving as the Court appointed co-mediator in Aearo Technologies, Inc. cases pending in the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of Indiana.

3. I also serve as an International Judge of the Singapore International Commercial Court, a leading forum for legal services and international dispute resolution, where I focus on cross-border insolvency matters.

4. Since leaving the bench, through Sontchi, LLC and, until May 31, 2023, through DelawareADR, LLC, I have focused on the mediation and arbitration of complex commercial disputes. My alternative dispute resolution practice focuses on commercial disputes arising in bankruptcy and out-of-court restructurings. I am also engaged in providing expert consultation services, including acting as a testifying expert witness.

5. To comply with the requirements of Federal Rule of Bankruptcy Procedure 2014, I performed, or caused to be performed, a conflict search to identify for disclosure any parties relevant to this Declaration and these proceedings and to determine any connection that I and/or Sontchi, LLC, may hold to each such party. I performed the conflicts check against the list of interested parties provided to me by Debtors' counsel. I did not, however, perform a conflict check against the Debtors' customer list due to its enormous size. Neither I nor my immediate family have ever

invested in nor have been customers of the Debtors or any other cryptocurrency related firm. I am, however, the Court appointed fee examiner in the Celsius Network, LLC bankruptcy cases pending in the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of New York.

6. In 2022, my son, Andrew C. Sontchi, worked as an unpaid intern in the Munich, Germany offices of Kirkland & Ellis International, LLP ("KEI"). He received no pay for his work at KEI and covered all of his expenses. To the best of his knowledge and recollection, he performed no work related to the Debtors or their affiliates during his time with KEI.

7. On or about December 19, 2022, I was retained as a consulting expert in a matter unrelated to these chapter 11 cases by Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan, LLP.

8. In 2023, in our capacity as co-mediators in the Aearo Technologies, Inc. bankruptcy pending in the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of Indiana, my co-mediator and I retained Derrek Abbott, Esq. of Morris, Nichols, Arsht & Tunnell to serve as our counsel in response to subpoenas issues by certain parties in that case. That representation is open but is not active.

9. I have determined that neither I nor Sontchi, LLC is currently employed by any of the Debtors and that neither I nor Sontchi, LLC has been employed by any of the Debtors in at least five years.

10. I have also determined that neither I nor Sontchi, LLC have been employed by, or will be employed by, any party in connection with these proceedings.

11. In my capacity as Bankruptcy Judge, I encountered many of the bankruptcy professionals, non-bankruptcy advisors, and other interested parties in the courtroom in matters unrelated to these bankruptcy cases. A complete listing of those connections is not feasible, but I do not believe any impair my disinterestedness in this matter.

12. To the best of my knowledge, this Declaration discloses all connections between myself or Sontchi, LLC, and the interested parties known to me as of today's date. Due to the size of the Debtors and the complexity of these cases, I and Sontchi, LLC cannot state with absolute certainty that, at this time, we have identified and disclosed every single connection we have with each Interested Party. However, I and Sontchi, LLC will promptly file supplemental disclosures of any such connections if any additional relevant information comes to my or Sontchi, LLC's attention.

13. To the best of my knowledge and belief, insofar as I have been able to ascertain after reasonable inquiry:

- (a) Neither I nor Sontchi, LLC hold or represent any interest adverse to the Debtors, the Debtor Affiliates, or their respective estates.
- (b) Other than in my capacity as Bankruptcy Judge, neither I nor Sontchi, LLC are connected with the United States Trustee for Region 3, any persons employed by the United States Trustee's office for Region 3, or any Bankruptcy Judge for the District of New Jersey.

14. Based on the foregoing, I and Sontchi, LLC are "disinterested persons" as that term is defined in 11 U.S.C. § 101(14).

15. Neither I nor Sontchi, LLC have entered into any agreement to share compensation as it may be awarded herein except as permitted under 11 U.S.C. §

504(b), and neither I nor anyone at Sontchi, LLC is a relative of the bankruptcy judge approving my and Sontchi, LLC's retention as proscribed by Fed. R. Bankr. P. 5002(a).

I state under penalty of perjury, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief.



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Christopher S. Sontchi  
Sontchi, LLC

Dated: May 30, 2023